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***The Affordable Care Act is still under attack and  
the 2018-ACA Open Enrollment closes in 1 month, on December 15***

The National Association for Multicultural Education knows the immense value of the Affordable Care Act. Health care accessibility and affordability are social justice issues. [Nearly 20 million Americans](#) have gained health insurance coverage since 2010. The increase in the number of insured Americans is a remarkable achievement, celebrated by NAME.

Yet since taking office, President Donald Trump and the Republican-controlled Congress have repeatedly tried to dismantle and replace the signature legislation of the administration of President Barack Obama. The failure in Congress to take away what so many Americans depend on for their good health and well-being has resulted in the president acting alone recently to end crucial payments to participating ACA health insurers, which enable millions of low-income people to afford insurance coverage. Republican drafts of tax overhaul legislation also take aim at undoing the ACA. As a social justice and equity organization, NAME knows that these policies will negatively affect people with serious medical conditions and will likely cause more insurers to withdraw from the ACA marketplace.

To bring this issue into better focus, imagine what life would be like today for children in no- and low-income families if the free and reduced school breakfast and lunch program were eliminated. Educators and progressive policymakers realized years ago that for social justice reasons, children did better academically and competitively in school when they had good, nutritional meals. As educators and educational advocates committed to equity, we can imagine children from no- and low-income families entering the classroom with a substantial illness, which compromises their ability to learn. Quality health care provided by the Affordable Care Act provides the same social justice and equity advantage for low- and no-income children and their families, removing the burden of worry and cost so children can enter classrooms healthy and ready to do their best.

Ending the federal payments would further destabilize the Affordable Care Act. To make matters worse, the administration has waffled on a commitment to support a bipartisan congressional effort to stabilize the ACA. NAME urges lawmakers to take action to provide a better foundation for the ACA so that more insurers will participate in the health care exchanges and even more people will receive coverage.

As a social justice and equity organization, NAME knows that the current policies are taking the country in the wrong direction, and the population of the United States collectively will suffer. This is yet another effort by the current administration to enact classist and racist policies that privilege the wealthy and, simultaneously, undermine the health and well-being of low-income and ethnically diverse children and families.

The executive branch of the federal government is sending the wrong message to the country — especially schoolchildren — about acting in the best interest of the American people. A healthier population in which costs are shared more equitably should be the goal for any elected official.

NAME knows that acting in any other way is detrimental to the happy, healthy communities we want for students and their families, especially the most vulnerable, neglected, and marginalized families.

*NOTE: 2018 Affordable Care Act Open Enrollment is open until December 15. Check [healthcare.gov](http://healthcare.gov) for details.*